Lemon meringue tartlets

Ingredients

- ¾ cup unsalted butter at room temperature
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 ¾ cups all purpose flour
- Pinch of salt
- 4 egg whites, room temperature
- 1 cup sugar
- Pinch of cream of tartar
- 2 jars of lemon curd (can be lightened with a little whipped cream, if desired)

Instructions

1. In the bowl of an electric mixer, mix together the butter, sugar and vanilla. Stir until combined. Add 1 ½ cup flour pinch of salt. If the mixture is not too dry, add the extra ¼ cup of flour (humidity affects this dough, so if it is more dry, the last ¼ cup will not be needed). Mix until just combined.
2. Press the dough into the bottom of the tart pans and place into the freezer for at least 20 minutes.
3. Pre-heat your oven to 350 degrees. Bake the tart pan for 20 minutes. After removing from the oven, use a teaspoon measure to press down the bottom of the tart, if the indentation has reduced. Allow to cool slightly and then remove the tarts from the pan. If you wait too long, the tarts will be difficult to remove.
4. To make the meringue topping, put the egg whites in a very clean stainless steel bowl (such as a Kitchen Aid Mixer bowl). Whisk in the sugar and place the bowl over a pot of simmering water. Whisking constantly, cook the mixture until it reaches 140 F on an instant read thermometer. Remove the bowl from over the simmering water and attach the bowl to a stand mixer fitted with the whisk.
5. Beat the mixture on high until it becomes opaque and forms stick peaks. When the mixture begins to thicken, add the cream of tartar. After the meringue comes together, fill a pastry bag with a large star tip with the meringue.
6. In the bottom of the cooled tart shells, spoon some lemon curd. Pipe the meringue over the lemon curd. Toast the meringue under a broiler or caramelize them with a kitchen torch.
7. Serve immediately!
Lemon Curd Tart \{crust portion\}

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**Ingredients**

- 12 tablespoons (1 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter, plus more for greasing, at room temperature
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- Pinch salt

**Directions**

Mix the butter and sugar together in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a paddle attachment until they are just combined. Add the vanilla. In a medium bowl, sift together the flour and salt, then add them to the butter-and-sugar mixture. Mix on low speed until the dough starts to come together. Dump onto a surface dusted with flour and shape into a flat disk. Press the dough into a 10-inch-round or 9-inch-square false-bottom tart pan, making sure that the finished edge is flat. Chill until firm.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Butter 1 side of a square of aluminum foil to fit inside the chilled tart and place it, buttered side down, on the pastry. Fill with beans or rice. Bake for 20 minutes. Remove the foil and beans, prick the tart all over with the tines of a fork, and bake again for 20 to 25 minutes more, or until lightly browned. Allow to cool to room temperature.

**“Baked” meringue Recipe**

Whisk the egg whites and sugar together until combined. Set the bowl over a saucepan of simmering water. Cook, whisking constantly until the sugar is completely dissolved and the mixture registers 140 degrees F on an instant-read thermometer, 6 to 8 minutes.

Remove the bowl from the pan and, with an electric mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat the mixture on high speed until stiff peaks form, adding the cream of tarter when the mixture begins to thicken or after 3 minutes. When the mixture almost holds stiff peaks, after about 6 minutes, add the liqueur and beat to incorporate it.

*after assembly* Preheat the broiler to high. Slice the tarts under the broiler and cook until just brown.
These tarts should be eaten within 24 hours. If you are making them for dinner, prepare them in the morning and leave them at room temperature until ready to serve.